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Serial No. 10/001,257 filed 11/27/2001
Response dated November 2, 2006
to Office Action dated May 3, 2006

Listing of Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claims 1-70 (cancelled)

71. (Previously Presented) A method, comprising:

- (a) providing a no-spill drinking apparatus, said apparatus being provided for a user to drink liquid out of, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the user;**
- (b) said no-spill drinking apparatus comprising a cap, said cap further comprising a spout, said cap being provided for the user to drink liquid from said spout, and to prevent spilling of liquid out of said spout when the user is not drinking from said spout;**
- (c) said cap comprising a valve, said valve comprising a flexible material, said flexible material comprising an opening therein;**
- (d) said apparatus comprising a blocking element below said flexible material;**
- (e) wherein said opening of said flexible material rests against said blocking element when the user is not drinking from said spout;**
- (f) wherein said flexible material rises off of said blocking element, unblocking said opening, when the user sucks through said spout to drink from said spout;**
- (g) wherein said apparatus is designed to allow air into said apparatus, said cap comprising a hole for air, such that when the user sucks through said spout, liquid passes through said opening and out of said spout, and air passes through said hole for air and into said apparatus;**
- (h) and wherein said apparatus comprises a flow bridge, said flow bridge being a barrier above said flexible material which blocks said flexible material from moving beyond a maximum distance after said flexible material rises off of said blocking element.**

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72. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said opening is a hole.
73. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said opening is a slit.
74. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus further comprises a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap.
75. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a sidewall having a first thickness, and comprises a center area of a thickness which is greater than said first thickness.
76. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and wherein said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.
77. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus further comprises:
- (a) a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap;
 - (b) wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a sidewall having a first thickness, and comprises a center area of a thickness which is greater than said first thickness;
 - (c) and wherein said apparatus comprises a cup, and said cup is hard.
78. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus is provided for drinking by a child, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the child.
79. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus comprises a cup.
80. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 77, wherein said apparatus is provided for drinking by a child, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the child.
81. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 77, wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and wherein said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.

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82. (Previously Presented) A method, comprising:

- (a) providing a no-spill drinking apparatus, said apparatus being provided for a user to drink liquid out of, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the user;
- (b) said no-spill drinking apparatus comprising a cap, said cap comprising a spout, said cap being provided for the user to drink liquid from said spout, and to prevent spilling of liquid out of said spout when the user is not drinking from said spout;
- (c) said cap comprising a valve, said valve comprising a flexible material, said flexible material comprising an opening therein;
- (d) said apparatus comprising a blocking element below said flexible material;
- (e) wherein said opening of said flexible material rests against said blocking element when the user is not drinking from said spout;
- (f) and wherein said flexible material rises off of said blocking element, unblocking said opening, when the user sucks through said spout to drink from said spout;
- (g) wherein said flexible material comprises the shape of a bowl, said bowl having a top and a bottom, said opening being located in said bottom, said bowl being initially upright when said opening rests against said blocking element;
- (h) and wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout, such that said bottom of said bowl moves toward said top of said bowl, with said opening in said bottom moving toward said top of said bowl, to allow liquid to exit through said opening;
- (i) and wherein said cap further comprises a hole for air, such that when the user sucks through said spout, liquid passes through said opening and out of said spout, and air passes through said hole for air and into said apparatus.

83. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said opening is a hole.

84. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said opening is a slit.

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85. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus further comprising a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap.
86. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a sidewall having a first thickness, and comprises a center area of a thickness which is greater than said first thickness.
87. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and wherein said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.
88. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus further comprises:
- (a) a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap;
 - (b) wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a sidewall having a first thickness, and comprises a center area of a thickness which is greater than said first thickness;
 - (c) and wherein said apparatus comprises a cup, and said cup is hard.
89. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus is provided for drinking by a child, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the child.
90. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 88, wherein said apparatus is provided for drinking by a child, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the child.
91. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 88, wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and wherein said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.
92. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus comprises a cup.

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93. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus further comprises:
- (a) a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap;
 - (b) wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a sidewall having a first thickness, and comprises a center area of a thickness which is greater than said first thickness;
 - (c) and wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.
94. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
95. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 72, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
96. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 73, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
97. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 74, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
98. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 75, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
99. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 76, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
100. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 77, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
101. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 78, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.

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102. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 79, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
103. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 80, wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout.
104. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.
105. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 77, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.
106. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 80, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.
107. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening

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is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.

108. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 88, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.
109. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 93, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.
110. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 94, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.
111. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 100, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.

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112. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 101, wherein said apparatus further comprises a second valve, said second valve comprising a second opening and a second blocking element, wherein said second blocking element blocks the flow of air through said second opening when the user is not sucking at said spout, and wherein said second opening is unblocked to allow air to pass through said second opening when the user sucks at said spout.
113. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 104, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.
114. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 105, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.
115. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 106, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.
116. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 107, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.
117. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 108, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.
118. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 109, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.
119. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 110, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.
120. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 111, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.
121. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 112, wherein said second opening is smaller than said opening of said flexible material.

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122. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus comprises a barrier above said flexible material which blocks movement of said flexible material after said flexible material rises off of said blocking element.
123. (New) A method as claimed in claim 85, wherein said apparatus comprises a barrier above said flexible material which blocks movement of said flexible material after said flexible material rises off of said blocking element.
124. (New) A method as claimed in claim 88, wherein said apparatus comprises a barrier above said flexible material which blocks movement of said flexible material after said flexible material rises off of said blocking element.
125. (New) A method as claimed in claim 93, wherein said apparatus comprises a barrier above said flexible material which blocks movement of said flexible material after said flexible material rises off of said blocking element.
126. (New) A method as claimed in claim 109, wherein said apparatus comprises a barrier above said flexible material which blocks movement of said flexible material after said flexible material rises off of said blocking element.
127. (New) A method as claimed in claim 118, wherein said apparatus comprises a barrier above said flexible material which blocks movement of said flexible material after said flexible material rises off of said blocking element.